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# HENNEPIN BI-CENTENARY.

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# THE HENNEPIN BI-CENTENARY

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ACCOUNT OF THE CELEBRATION

BY THE

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

OF THE

TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

DISCOVERY OF THE FALLS OF ST. ANTHONY,

BY LOUIS HENNEPIN.

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[FROM THE ST. PAUL DAILY GLOBE, JULY 4, 1880.]

SAINT PAUL :  
GLOBE PRINT.  
1880.







### *The Day We Celebrated.*

Louis Hennepin, a Franciscan (Recollect) missionary, was born at Ath, Belgium, about 1640, and died in Holland subsequent to 1690. After his entrance to the Franciscan order he traveled through Germany and Italy and was then for a year settled at Hal in Belgium. Then his superiors sent him to Artois, whence he visited Calais and Dunkirk and at these places acquired a taste for the sea by intercourse with sailors. It was an age of adventurous explorers by sea, and sailors were to be met at almost every port who knew more of the world than was taught in the schools where Hennepin was educated, and whose narratives of the strange lands and peoples they had seen were stranger than the most romantic of the narratives of the fathers he had read. From Artois he went to Holland, and for eight months had charge of a hospital at Maestricht. At the battle of Senef, between the Prince of Conde and William of Orange, in 1674, he was present as a regimental chaplain. The next year he was ordered to Canada, and embarked at La Rochelle with Bishop Laval and the Sieur de LaSalle, with whom he became a favorite. For some time he preached at Quebec, and then in 1676 he was sent to take charge of the Indian mission at Fort Fontenac, (commanded by La Salle,) where the city of Kingston, Canada, now stands. While there he visited the Indians of the Five Nations and the Dutch settlement at Albany. In 1678, having meantime returned to Quebec, he was attached to the expedition of La Salle, designed to find the mouth of the Mississippi and establish colonies; and on August 7, 1679, embarked on Lake Erie with La Salle, and his command, on board a vessel built for their lake voyage. They sailed over Lakes Erie, Huron and Michigan, and by canoes (and portages) followed the St. Joseph's, Kankakee and Illinois rivers, and built Fort Crevecoeur near the present site of Peoria. From here, while La Salle returned to Fort Frontenac for supplies, Father Hennepin was charged with a voyage of discovery to the sources of the Mississippi, which had not then been explored above the mouth of the Wisconsin. Accompanied by Picard du Gay and Michael Ako, he set out in a canoe February 29, 1680, followed the Illinois to its mouth, and ascended the Mississippi, was taken captive by the Sioux, and while a captive with them, saw the Falls of St. Anthony, and gave them their name in honor of his patron saint.

Subsequently, after his return to Europe and publication of his narrative of La Salle's (first) expedition, and his own explorations, with a description of the upper Mississippi country, on account of disobedience, he was forced to leave the service of France and is said to have entered the service of William III. of England.

About 1697 he abandoned the clerical dress but to the end of his life subscribed to his name "Recollect Missionary and Apostolic Notary."

Hennepin was one of the many who are types of that age of discovery, a bold, light hearted explorer, but an enthusiast, a quaint writer, but so far as his description of the upper Mississippi country and its Indians can be identified with our later knowledge, a remarkably correct narrator. But a book, purporting to be a second edition of his narration, which was published in Utrecht after, or about the time he is said to have gone into the service of the English king, contains a manifestly false interpolation—an account of a voyage down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico, which Hennepin could not have made. Because of this Father Hennepin has been bitterly denounced by various historians. Bancroft, for an extreme instance, says that Hennepin "is now remembered, not merely as a light hearted, ambitious, daring discoverer, but also as a boastful liar."

The Historical Society of Minnesota, who have had occasion to verify Hennepin's original narration, and found it substantially correct, being also in possession of information that the researches of a competent American historian and antiquarian (John Gilmary Shea) have cleared away the Utrecht interpolation and other matters, so that the first white man in Minnesota may without doubt be regarded as a worthy example of the missionary priests of his time, has had no hesitation in giving to Minnesota as a day of festival and congratulation, the two hundredth anniversary of Father Hennepin's most striking achievement, from which dates the beginning of the history of our beloved State.

In celebrating the day, (fixed for convenience in absence of knowledge as to the precise day on which the Recollect missionary in 1680 first saw and named the great falls of the Mississippi,) our Historical Society celebrated the birthday of Minnesota and the new Northwest of to-day. In honoring Hennepin they honored the class to which he belonged—those brave clergymen of two centuries ago who came with the first of white men into the heart of our continent and who were at once explorers, historians of discovery and heralds and martyrs of religion.

### *Minneapolis.*

The young giant city at the Falls of St. Anthony has seconded the purpose of the Historical Society, with liberality of expenditure and heartiness of hospitality, to which must mainly be attributed the great success of the celebration. For details of the elaborate preparations for the event and of the entertainment of all attending it from abroad, the reader is referred to the particular accounts below of the proceedings of the day.

It will suffice to say here, and to avoid repetition, that in every respect the public-spirited citizens of Minneapolis won honor for themselves in honoring their guests of the day.

#### IN GALA ATTIRE.

The city of Minneapolis never saw such a day as yesterday. It almost appeared as though the inanimate earth on which the city is built—her magnificent blocks of buildings, her immense mills and even the grand falls themselves, were aware that something more than ordinary was taking place. The broad avenues were teeming with life, and every artery of the city pulsed with a glad and gleesome feeling, which developed itself in the smiling countenances of her citizens, and with the outward emblems of a general rejoicing. Most of the business houses and many private dwellings were decorated with flags, evergreens, etc., all testifying to the general joy felt by all. In fact it was Minneapolis' "Saturday out" and she enjoyed it. The privacy of home and the conventionalities of society which ordinarily "doth hedge us in" were for the nonce laid aside, and all, whether old or young, regardless of previous condition, gave themselves up to a gala day. The moving tide of humanity, the gayly decked blocks of buildings, the floating stars and stripes and the general air of pleasure everywhere visible, conspired to give the locality a holiday appearance never seen before. Certainly not since the day Father Hennepin looked upon it and pronounced it good, two hundred years ago.

#### *The Grand Procession.*

The official programme for the day had announced that the procession would be formed promptly at 9 A. M. Committees of arrangements may propose, but it not infrequently happens that those who take part in pageants of this character, dispose of time to suit their convenience. It so happened yesterday. As early as 8 o'clock all the principal streets of the city were filled with people on foot, in carriages, on horseback and in arms, waiting for the procession to form. It was somehow understood that General Sherman, Secretary Ramsey and the other notables were to arrive at an early hour at the University, and come from thence to the Nicollet hotel, where arrangements were to be made for assigning them positions in the grand procession. An immense throng of people assembled in front of the hotel and for over an hour waited patiently, in the broiling sun, to catch a glimpse of the distinguished visitors. About half past ten their curiosity was gratified, for at that hour a number of carriages, containing Gen. Sherman, Secretary Ramsey, Hon. E. B. Washburne and other distinguished gentlemen drove to the main entrance of the hotel. The features of nearly all were familiar to the

dense throng, and as they alighted from their carriages they were greeted with a succession of cheers. A few moments were spent in the parlors of the Nicollet to allow for introductions, refreshments, etc., when the party once more took their places in carriages and proceeded to Bridge Square where the grand procession was formed in the following order, under the command of Gen. T. L. Rosser, marshal of the day assisted by some aides:

#### THE ORDER OF PROCESSION:

Gen. Rosser, Marshal of the Day and Aide, Officer Hoy.  
Platoon of Sixteen Minneapolis Police. Commanded by Sergeant West.  
Great Western Union Band.  
Hon. W. D. Washburn and Mayor Rand in Carriages.  
General W. T. Sherman and Secretary of War Ramsey.  
Governor Pillsbury.  
Ex-Governor C. C. Washburn, and Rev. Mr. Neill.  
Hon. E. B. Washburne, D. Morrison and Anthony Kelly.  
Members of the City Council.  
Members of the County Board.  
City and County Officials.  
Hon. W. S. King and Friend.  
Fort Snelling Military Band.  
Two Companies U. S. Regulars.  
Veterans of the War for the Union.  
Mounted Zouave Lancers.  
Zouave Drum Corps and Band.  
Minneapolis Zouaves.  
Minneapolis Light Infantry.  
St. John the Baptiste Society.  
Swede Brothers' Society.  
Odd Fellows' Encampment.  
North Star Lodge, I. O. O. F.  
Sons of Herman.  
Father Matthew Cadets.  
Father Matthew T. A. B. Society.  
Woman's Christian Temperance Union.  
Father McGolrick and Priests.  
Citizens in Carriages.

It required some time to bring order out of the chaotic mass, which had not only filled Bridge Square, but all the streets adjacent with a surging tide of humanity on foot, in carriages and in every other species of conveyance. The throng had come "from the north and south, from the east and from the west," all intent upon seeing all they could and taking part in this pageantry. The grand marshal and his aids had a most difficult task to perform, but they finally succeeded, and the procession took up its line of march across the suspension bridge, in the order above given. When the carriage containing Gen. Sherman and Secretary Ramsey reached the eastern end of the bridge, and the vast crowd recognized the familiar countenances, cheer after cheer greeted the two distinguished men, who manage and control the military arm of this great republic. This hearty greeting was continued all along the line of march, and was responded to by both gentlemen rising and bowing in response. They rode in a splendid English drag drawn



by four beautiful horses gaily comparisoned and driven by Mr. R. F. Jones, the owner of the magnificent turn out.

Words are inadequate to describe the appearance of the procession and the streets along the line of march. The sidewalks and the streets also were a complete moving mass of humanity of all ages and both sexes. The suspension bridge never before was put to such a test, and hereafter it may be considered safe. Every available space was occupied by people on foot, while for fully a half hour the driveway was filled with two lines of carriages from end to end. The scene on University avenue when the procession was passing, baffles description. The procession formed across the street, but on either side of it was dense throngs of carriages, four or five abreast, while the sidewalks and private grounds of the residents were crowded with men, women and children. At every street crossing numbers of vehicles were added to the throng, and yet all moved on, slowly it is true, but without accident. Gen. Sherman was of course the lion of the day, and next to him came in for many compliments, a number of the organizations that formed a part of the procession. The Union Great Western Band; the Seventh Infantry Band from Fort Snelling, and the Minneapolis Zouave Band, Drum corps, elicited well deserved praise for their excellent music and splendid appearance. Companies C, K, and H, of the Seventh Infantry, under command of Major Benham, marched as only veterans can. The Minneapolis Zouaves made a fine appearance in their strange uniform, and the squad of mounted Lancers of the same organization were a marked feature of the procession. The Union Francaise of St. Paul, who turned out 150 strong, and were led by the Great Western Band, did themselves proud, being the largest organization in the line. Suffice it to say that it was a grand demonstration in which not only the cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis but the country for miles around united.

Over the entrance to the University grounds a grand arch had been erected beautifully ornamented with the national colors and evergreens, and bearing the inscription, "Soyez les Bienvenus."

#### *The Appearance of the Grounds.*

While so many were waiting on the avenue some hundreds had gathered on the University campus at an early hour, and before the head of the procession arrived at the green arch, under which it entered upon the field, thousands were assembled. The spacious campus—overlooking the river and falls, and a goodly part of the city—covered with a fine sward and shaded by noble trees, was supplied for the occasion with a covered stand for the Historical Society and its guests

and seats for the audience, and also with numerous tables for free refreshment of visitors, and with many tents for their shelter and entertainment. Around the north and west sides of the campus were arranged the various tents and headquarters of the different bodies taking part in the celebration. A short distance from the main entrance to the grounds, on the right, was located seven tables, each 210 feet in length. These tables were loaded with substantial food, enough to feed thousands, and thousands were fed at this hospitable board. All were invited, and among the many thousands there not one went away hungry, except at his or her accord. This branch was under the supervision of George A. Brackett, Esq., and he managed it with a method and a beaming hospitality that will be long remembered by thousands whom he fed. In fact it may be said that all went away prepared to say: "I was a hungered and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink, I was a stranger, and ye took me in." Passing on down to the right was a tent reserved for the members of the council of the cities. Under this canvas were two tables, sufficient to accommodate the number expected to be present, and supplied with good things enough to satisfy even an alderman's stomach.

Next to this was a canopy supplied with chairs, where the weary might find rest.

Then came the grand tent, under which Governor Pillsbury had provided a repast for the distinguished visitors and the members of the Historical Society. Under this large canopy was fifteen tables arranged in circular form. The tent was tastefully decorated with the national colors and evergreens, and the tables were adorned with a profusion of flowers, presenting a picture of great beauty. Under this canvas the Governor received and feasted his friends after the formal exercises were over. Never before did such a collection of distinguished men and fair women meet within sight and sound of St. Anthony Falls. Connected with this was another tent, where, during the entire day, such refreshments as lemonade, sandwiches, etc., were dispensed to the hungry and thirsty.

A number of other tents were scattered around for the accommodation, convenience and comfort of ladies, the various visiting organizations, etc., etc. Probably the most important of these tents were two—one large and handsomely fitted up where ladies could obtain lemonade, ices, etc., and the other called the "house that Jack built," for gentlemen, where they could obtain a bountiful supply of ice water. In this tent they had on exhibition specimens of water said to have been bottled by Father Hennepin at the time he discovered the falls. It had improved wonderfully with age. A large number tasted it (purely out of curios-

ity) and they informed the *GLOBE* reporter that it was not bad to take.

Many columns might be filled with accounts of all there was to be seen and done on the grounds. The imagination of the reader must supply the deficiency. It is sufficient to say that the citizens of Minneapolis, both in their private and corporate capacity, dispensed a boundless hospitality on the occasion, and all, the many thousands present, went away satisfied that it was good for them to be there.

#### *The Society and Its Guests.*

It was about 10:30 A. M. when the head of the procession arrived on the grounds, and some time was necessarily taken in placing the military and societies, and in seating the people, who wished to listen to the oration and addresses. Meantime the Historical Society and its guests were seated upon the grand stand. Among this notable company the following were recognized from the reporter's table: Gen. H. H. Sibley of St. Paul, president of the Historical Society; Hon. Alex. Ramsey, Secretary of War; Gen. W. T. Sherman, U. S. A.; Archbishop Tache of St. Boniface, Manitoba; Bishop La Fleche, of Three Rivers, Lower Canada; Bishops Grace and Ireland, St. Paul; Mgr. J. de Neve Rector of the American College, Louvain, Belgium; Rev. Fr. Desaulniers, St. Bonaventure, Canada; Rev. G. Dugast, St. Boniface, Manitoba; Rev. J. A. Andre, Inver Grove, Minnesota; Rev. James McGolrick, Minneapolis; Justice Miller, of the U. S. Supreme court; Judge Gilfillan of the State Supreme court; Judge McCrary of the U. S. Circuit court; Judge Nelson, of the U. S. District court; Gen. Terry and other army officers from department headquarters. St. Paul; Gen. Gibbon and officers of the Seventh Infantry, Fort Snelling; Col. Barry, Washington; Hon. E. B. Washburne, Galena, and Albert D. Hager, Chicago, the latter secretary, and both delegates to the Chicago Historical Society; Hon. C. H. Berry, Winona; Hon. John S. Pillsbury, Governor of Minnesota; Ex-Gov. C. K. Davis; Ex-Gov. Wm. R. Marshall; Hon. C. C. Washburn, Wisconsin; Gen. R. W. Johnson, St. Paul; Hon. W. D. Washburn, Minneapolis; Hon. S. J. R. McMillan, U. S. Senator; Ex-Senator H. M. Rice; Mr. Sprague, of Minneapolis, a soldier of 1812; Rev. Mr. Ribeldaffer, of the State Reform school; Rev. E. D. Neill, Mayor Rand, Wm. S. King, W. W. McNair, Jno. H. Stevens, H. Mattson, O. V. Tonsley, D. Morrison and N. B. Harwood, all of Minneapolis; I. De Graff, Russell Blakeley, E. S. Goodrich, Edmund Rice, Fletcher Williams, H. L. Moss, I. V. D. Heard and J. B. Chaney, of St. Paul; Hon. O. P. Whitcomb, State auditor; Hon. D. Burt, superintendent of public instruction; and President Folwell and the Faculty of the State University.

When Gen. Sherman escorted by Gen. Sibley, and Secretary Ramsey escorted by Gen. Terry, came upon the stand they were warmly applauded, and Gen. Sherman especially seemed to be the favorite. In fact, throughout the exercises, he could hardly move without starting a round of applause. It was evident there was present a goodly number of the boys who marched through Georgia with Sherman.

While the procession was marching into the campus, a salute was fired by a section of artillery from Fort Snelling; and as all arrangements were about concluded, at 11:35 A. M., the Union Great Western band opened the exercises by playing the national airs, after which Gen. Sibley addressed the multitude.

Gen. Sibley made a brief opening address which was followed by ex Gov. C. K. Davis, who delivered the oration of the day. Secretary Ramsey, Gen. Sherman, Bishop Ireland and Gen. Rosser followed with interesting addresses, and this concluded the speaking.

[As it is the intention of the Society to include the Oration, Poem, &c., in their next volume of Collections, they are omitted in this account.]

#### *From Labor to Refreshments.*

The exercises of the day being completed, while the military companies, societies and bands were entertained at their headquarters and visitors generally were supplied with refreshments at the tables spread in the groves, the Historical Society and its guests with their ladies and many friends, were the guests of Gov. Pillsbury in a grand marquee covering tables at which two or three hundred persons were seated and were fed bounteously. After refreshments, Gen. Sherman and Gov. Pillsbury were at home to everybody for a long time during which both gentlemen had a steady succession of friendly greetings and hand-shakes.

Slowly, at if loth to leave the place of pleasure, the organized companies and societies gathered and marched away and the visitors and their hosts of the day one by one dropped away. But so great was the number present and so leisurely their departure that it was near night fall before the campus began to assume a deserted appearance.

All the incidents and pleasures of the day could not be well described in one issue of a journal, attempting also to give the general news of the day. There were exhibition drills by the militia companies, interesting reunions, and pleasant social and personal events worthy of mention, which have to be omitted. In fact, while the great crowd was at and around the grand stand, there was enough going on on other parts of the field to have left a score of reporters busy.

It was a great day for the Historical Society, for Minneapolis, and for the Recollect Missionary of two hundred years ago.



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